DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 245 972 SO 015 732

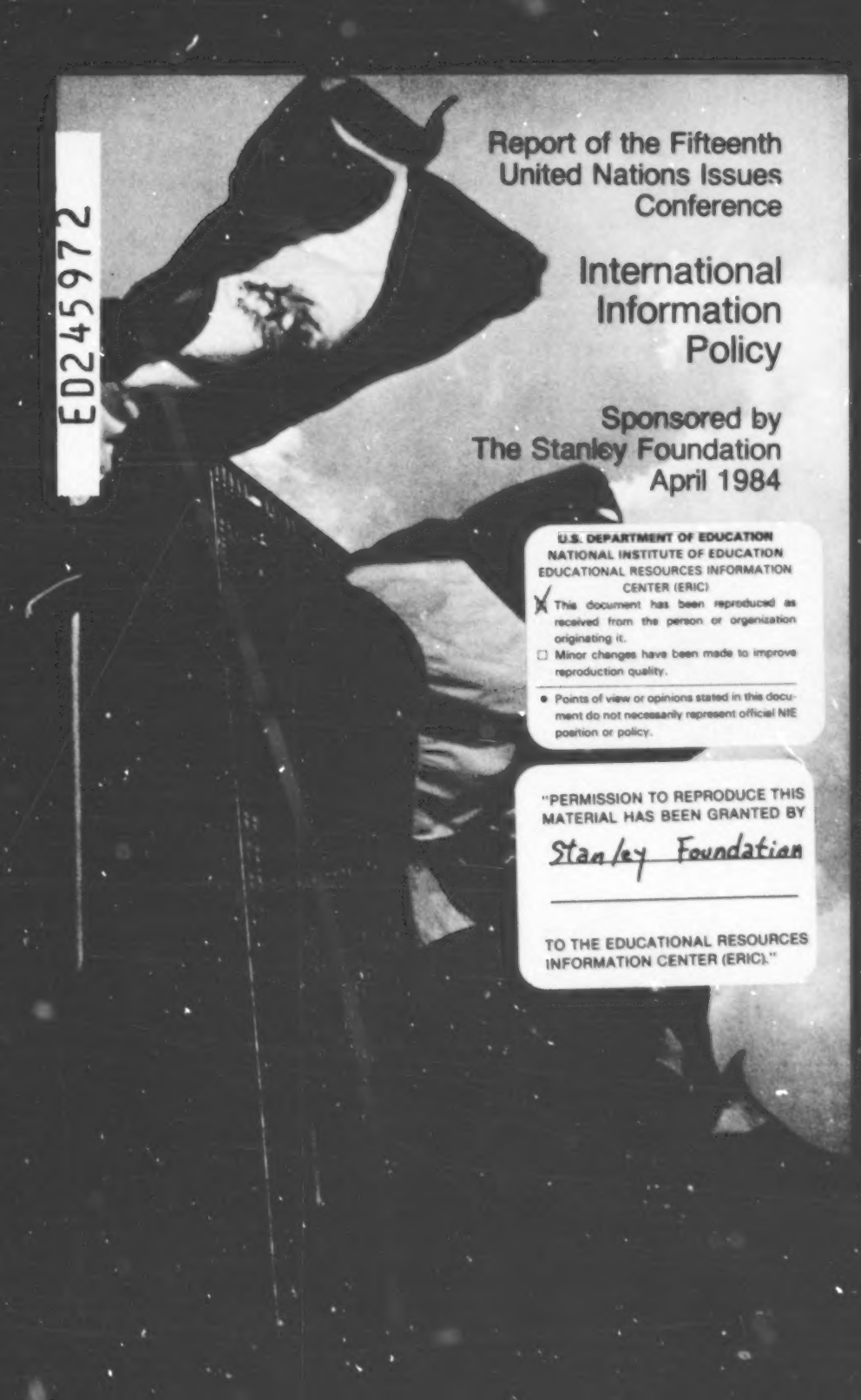
TITLE	International Information Policy. Report of the United Nations Issues Conference (15th, New Paltz, New York, April 13-15, 1984).
INSTITUTION	Stanley Foundation, Muscatine, Iowa.
PUB DATE	Apr 84
NOTE	32p.; Photographs may not reproduce clearly.
AVAILABLE FROM	The Stanley Foundation, 420 East Third St., Muscatine, IA 52761 (free).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Conflict Resolution; Developed Nations; Developing Nations; Freedom of Speech; Government Role; *Information Services; Information Systems; International Cooperation; *International Relations; Journalism; *News Media; News Reporting; *Policy Formation; *World Problems
IDENTIFIERS	United Nations; United Nations Economic and Social Council

ABSTRACT

Highlights and recommendations of a conference focusing on the conflict over international information policy are divided into two sections. First, the opening speech discusses the importance of the free flow of information, the historical growth and current dominance of information flow by Northern hemisphere countries, the roles of the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) and UNESCO in the controversy, and the conference goals of encouraging cooperation between Northern and Southern hemisphere blocs on this issue. The remainder of the text contains the rapporteurs' report on conference proceedings, subdivided into three parts. The first part places the conceptual conflict over information policy into historical context and examines the role of national governments in media regulation, the conduct of journalists, and the potential impact of NWICO on information policy. The next part reviews practical programs to strengthen information systems in developing countries; UNESCO, the International Programme for the Development of Communication, United Nations activities, public and private sector efforts, journalist training programs, editor training programs, and tecnology transfer. The final part of this section cites eight recommendations formulated at the conference. Additional material consists of a list of conference participants and a summary of Stanley Foundation activities. (LP)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED245972



Report of the Fifteenth United Nations Issues Conference

International Information Policy

Sponsored by The Stanley Foundation April 1984

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Stanley Foundation

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

International Information Policy

World information and communications problems have been debated for more than a decade. Many of the participants at the United Nations Issues Conference have met, discussed, and sometimes argued these same issues before. In some respects the years of debate have resolved few differences. Wide ideological disputes over the changing shape of the world information fabric still exist and have been widely publicized.

It may therefore surprise many to learn that this group of experts from diverse backgrounds found much on which they could agree. This report does not intend to diminish the remaining differences between interested parties. However, the spirit of the conference may attest to the maturing of this issue. These participants, at least, have moved well beyond being paralyzed by their own rhetoric and ideology.

The Stanley Foundation encourages use of this report for educational purposes. Any part of the material may be duplicated with proper acknowledgment. Additional copies are available free of charge.

Cover Photo: United Nations

ISSN 0743-9180

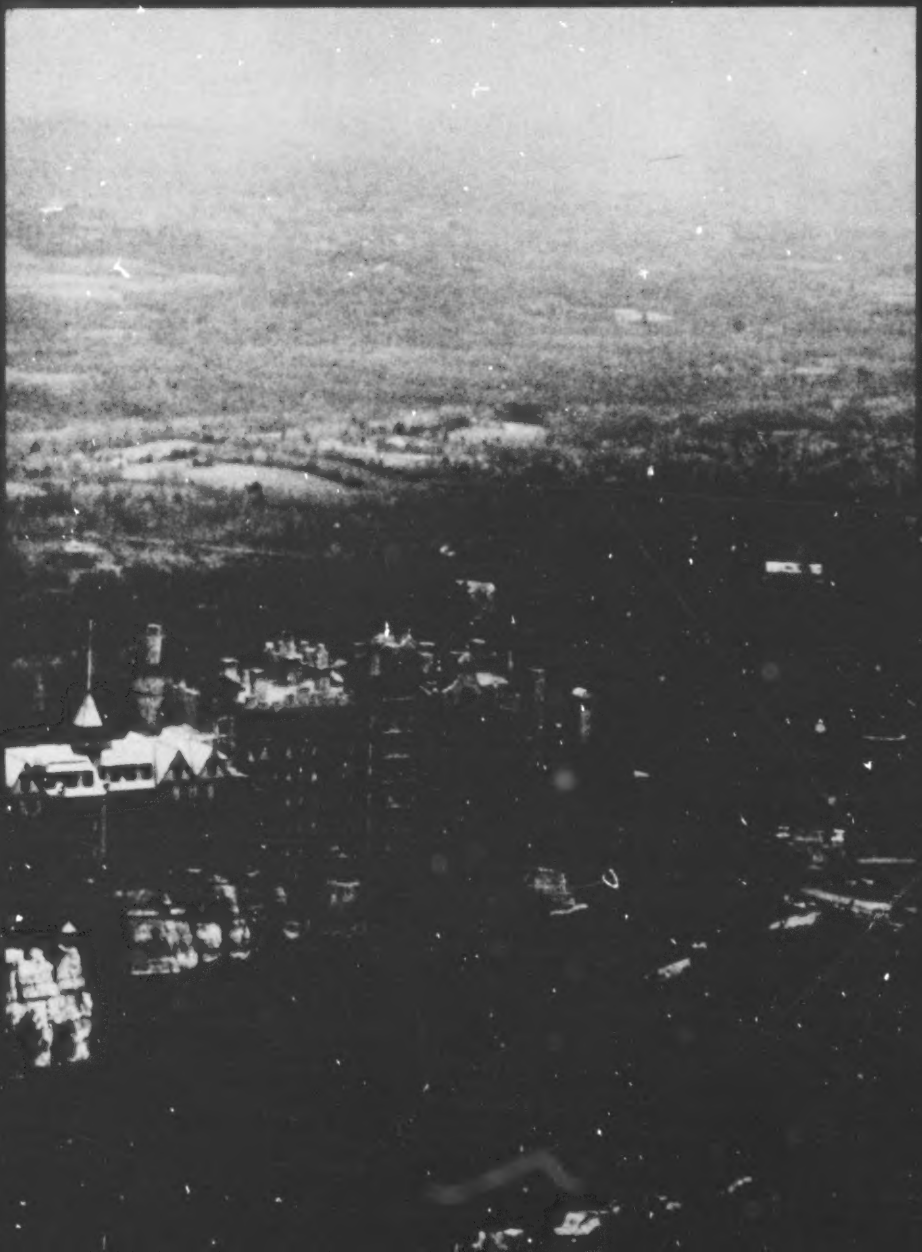
Report of the Fifteenth
United Nations Issues
Conference

International Information Policy

April 13-15, 1984

(Formerly United Nations
Procedures Conference)

Sponsored by
The Stanley Foundation
420 East Third Street
Muscatine, Iowa 52761 USA
Telephone (319) 264-1500



About This Conference Series

In 1970 the Stanley Foundation established a series of annual United Nations Procedures Conferences to examine ways to strengthen UN organizational structures, mechanisms, and procedures. In recent years conference themes have been expanded to include political and development issues as well as procedural matters. Therefore, in 1984 the conference series title was changed to United Nations Issues Conference to reflect the broader range of topics. As a continuation of the United Nations Procedures Conferences, this year's meeting carries the "fifteenth conference" designation.

United Nations Issues Conferences will continue to bring together experienced UN diplomats, Secretariat officials, and outside experts to formulate policy recommendations directed at improving some aspects of the United Nations' work. The conference format is informal, round-table discussion. Participants attend as individuals rather than as representatives of their government or organization, and all discussions are off the record.

This report was prepared by the rapporteurs following the conference. Participants neither reviewed nor approved the text; therefore, it should not be assumed that every participant subscribes to all recommendations, observations, and conclusions. The rapporteurs accept full responsibility for content. Views contained in the report are not necessarily those of the Stanley Foundation.

Mohonk Mountain House
from Sky Top trail

Participants

Conference Chairman

C. Maxwell Stanley, President, The Stanley Foundation

Rapporteurs

Jeff Martin, Associate Director, The Stanley Foundation

David Doerge, Director of Research Activities, The Stanley Foundation

Participants

Narinder Aggarwala, Regional Information Officer for Asia and the Pacific and Co-ordinator of the Field Coverage Programme, United Nations Development Programme

Yasushi Akashi, Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, United Nations

Miguel A. Albornoz, Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations; Vice Chairman, UN Committee on Information

Margaret E. Bailey, Managing Editor, *World Press Review*

Michael J. Berlin, UN Correspondent, *The New York Post* and *The Washington Post*

Dana R. Bullen, Executive Director, World Press Freedom Committee

Keith D. Evetts, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom to the United Nations; Member, UN Committee on Information

Brennon Jones, Executive Director, Interlink Press Service

Joseph A. Mehan, Chief, Public Information-USA, for UNESCO

Luis Moreno-Salcedo, Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Philippines to the United Nations; Chairman, UN Committee on Information

William Powell, Director of Public Information, United Nations Association of the United States of America

Sarah Goddard Power, Member, Regent of the University of Michigan; former Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of International Organization Affairs, US Department of State

Willi Schlegel, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the German Democratic Republic to the United Nations; Vice Chairman, UN Committee on Information

S. Nihal Singh, Senior Associate, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; former Editor, *The Statesman*

G. Jean Soso, Deputy Director, Communications, Office of Communications and UNESCO Affairs, US Department of State

Richard H. Stanley, President, Stanley Consultants, Inc.; Vice President, The Stanley Foundation

H. L. Stevenson, Executive Vice President/Editorial, United Press International

Leonard R. Sussman, Executive Director, Freedom House; Vice Chairman, US National Commission for UNESCO

Stanley Foundation Conference Staff

Jim Berard, Producer, "Common Ground"

Carol Matthews, Project Assistant

C. M. Stanley

"Misunderstandings [about communications issues] are exacerbated by some of the rhetoric advanced by both sides. Especially in the early days of the debate, harsh rhetoric and radical ideas were pushed to the fore by supporters of the new order. It was met with equally shrill rhetoric from opponents. . . . A new beginning based on positive attempts to understand the concerns and problems of each, whether or not they prove reconcilable, is needed."

Opening Remarks

by C. Maxwell Stanley
President, The Stanley Foundation

This is the fifteenth conference in our series on important United Nations issues; our topic is International Information Policy. Perhaps the title expresses more hope than reality because the topic is highly controversial and agreement upon a policy has yet to be achieved. The topic has been selected with the expectation that our discussions may provide greater understanding of different points of view and aid in resolving honest differences of opinion.

For many years the nonaligned nations, mostly of the Third World, have promoted the concept of a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) contending that they are unfairly treated by the existing information and communications systems dominated by developed nations. They view the new information order as the route to "justice." Just as vigorously, many elements of the existing system contend that the proposed new information order is a threat to "freedom" of the press and electronic media. The already heated debate has been intensified by the announced decision of the United States to withdraw from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The manner in which UNESCO has dealt with the subject undoubtedly contributed to the Reagan administration's justification for the announced US withdrawal.

Importance of Information

It would be difficult to overemphasize the importance of the free flow of information and of its accompanying communications systems. We live in a world which year by year becomes more interdependent. Interdependence affects every facet of global and national life: security, economic and social development, environmental protection, and human rights. Sound decisions by nations and by international organizations dealing with such problems are best based upon information that is accurate and timely. Information is also extremely important to the world of commerce. Millions of dollars may ride on accurate information influencing a transaction. Small wonder then that there is worldwide concern about the development and control of information and the management of communications systems.

History

The concern about flow of information and development of press and media capabilities in the Third World has been on the international agenda for nearly 40 years, beginning with the efforts of UNESCO shortly after its conception in 1946.

Unfortunately, this rudimentary awareness did little to stem the growing imbalance in the flow of information. Just as the North has remained dominant in economic development, so has it remained preeminent in the information field. Understandably, the South is concerned about the injustice of this imbalance.

Along with the historical growth and eventual domination of information flow by the North has come a commendable tradition of freedom of the press. Not always perfect and not always free from manipulation, this traditional aspect of information flow in the North has proven its worth time and again. So the historical record shows both injustice felt mostly in the Third World and a determination to maintain the positive tradition of press freedom in the developed world. The clash of these trends came to a head in the mid-1970s.

In 1976 the UNESCO General Conference, held in Nairobi, took up a draft of the Declaration on Mass Communications. Some provisions of this declaration called for government control of the media and set off alarms in the West. Thus began a protracted debate which in the early days generated more heat than light. Much attention was focused on unfortunate proposals such as the one to license journalists. While such a proposal has not been adopted, Western journalists and governments have been understandably concerned.

However, the elevated level of debate at UNESCO has served the positive purpose of calling developed countries' attention to the genuine problems which exist in the information and communications systems. For example, the dominance of the four Western-based news agencies—United Press International, Associated Press, Reuters, and Agence France-Presse—and the Eastern-based Tass has historically raised the ire of the Third World whose representatives charge that the selective reporting of these agencies has over time created a distorted picture of life in the developing countries. Journalists in the North are finding some legitimacy in complaints that reporting on the Third World too often focuses on catastrophes and *coups d'état*, and that such reporting unfairly repre-

sents the full range of events in developing countries. Likewise, they see that complaints about a one-way flow of information from North to South are largely true. That flow affects the image that people in the Third World have of themselves and of their countries; it sometimes crowds out the establishment of indigenous news and information services and spreads Western cultural values to developing countries in ways that are sometimes disruptive to traditional life patterns and mores. Some representatives in the Third World further charge that these distortions create a self-fulfilling prophecy for developing countries by creating doubt and inhibiting the flow of economic resources necessary for development.

The debate on how best to address these and related problems has gone on for more than eight years. Much of the inflammatory rhetoric has died down. Constructive steps have been taken. Efforts like the International Programme for the Development of Communications (IPDC) appear to hold some promise for making real progress on communication imbalances. Other UNESCO programs and bilateral efforts offer assistance to journalists and to media in developing countries. Within the developing world, efforts to broaden information sources have been attempted with varying degrees of success. The Nonaligned Pool, a news service which disseminates government news releases, is one which has both supporters and critics. However, all of these efforts combined are still far too small and are plagued by the political differences that separate North from South.

Political Situation

The information and communications issue is but another element of the ongoing North-South controversy. With minor exceptions, current communications systems are owned and operated by private sector organizations of the developed nations of the North. The contending nations, claiming inequitable treatment, are of the South.

To a remarkable degree, the controversy over the new information order parallels that concerning the proposed New International Economic Order (NIEO). The roster of participants is largely the same: the more developed nations versus the less developed nations. In both cases, the South, citing growing interdependence, wants a more equitable deal—a larger piece of the action. The South looks toward government action and the help of international organizations to address the problems. The North holds a bias toward private sector initiatives.

In both cases, East-West political differences also intervene. For political reasons, the Soviet Union and its client states tend to side with the South on both the information and development issues. They do so despite the paucity of their economic aid to developing nations and their own rigidly controlled information systems. In both cases, Westerners, particularly Americans, often contend that the proposals of the South reflect Marxist and communist concepts and unduly stress the role of governments.

The efforts of any international organization to multilaterally deal with global issues is basically a political endeavor; issues concerning information and communications are no exception. However, injection of extraneous and controversial political issues such as the Arab-Israeli conflict is inevitably divisive and counterproductive. Such politicization in UNESCO deliberations has increased the difficulty of reaching agreement on the new information order. Achieving agreement on information and communications issues is difficult enough without overloading debate by injecting elements of the East-West controversy or burdening it with unrelated controversies.

The objective of this conference, after reviewing the current situation, is to propose recommendations which will contribute to an agreement on policies fostering improved information and communications systems and programs. Not having your expertise, it would be inappropriate for me, as your chairman, to suggest what these recommendations might be. However, after some study of this subject, 10 years of managing *World Press Review* (a monthly magazine which excerpts material from the press outside of the United States), and nearly 40 years of watching the United Nations debate equally difficult issues, I feel confident in offering a few observations and questions concerning our discussions here as well as the ongoing efforts of the world community to deal with this issue.

Consensus and Controversy

Are there areas of agreement concerning the information and communications issue? There appear to be few, and too often the agreement is superficial. First, most people will acknowledge some merit in the contentions of the Third World: imbalances need to be overcome and the one-way flow of information from North to South must be moderated. Second, most agree that media in the North can improve the quality of reporting

on the Third World. Third, there is consensus that the media systems in many Third World countries need to be strengthened; this involves the training of personnel and transfer of technology among other things. Fourth, most people acknowledge that international organizations have a role to play in addressing these problems. Finally, nearly everyone is for both freedom and justice.

It is when we begin to consider specific steps to achieve these broad goals that controversies become clear. To which groups or agencies should communications aid be targeted? How much aid is needed? Who should control the funds? Will press freedoms be adequately protected? What is adequate protection?

One of the factors which underlies many of the issues is that while news media in the North are largely in the private sector, media in many developing countries are government owned and controlled. Thus, Third World governments seek assistance for state-owned facilities while Western nations would much prefer to help private media in the Third World. That basic difference also impacts on questions about which institutions and organizations should play a role in addressing information and communications problems. What should UNESCO or other intergovernmental organizations do? Where should bilateral assistance and private sector efforts be directed? What are the commercial interests of the private sector and how heavily should they be weighed? Answers to such questions must be found as efforts are made to increase mutual understanding, achieve compromise, and implement cooperation between North and South.

Understanding

Fundamental in dealing with the information and communications issue is the development of a broader understanding on the part of both sides. Today there is still a high level of misunderstanding and mistrust which fosters controversy. North and South have differing concepts of justice and freedom. While these values are generally held in esteem by all, the manner in which they apply to questions concerning information and communications is not mutually understood.

Likewise, there appears to be misunderstanding over the nature of the New World Information and Communication Order. Is it to be seen as a general concept which establishes objectives for an improved information balance? Or is it

intended to be a precise blueprint for structuring communication systems? If it is the latter, then concern about adequate protection of freedom will be greatly heightened. Is there not need for a more precise definition of the new information order?

Misunderstandings are exacerbated by some of the rhetoric advanced by both sides. Especially in the early days of the debate, harsh rhetoric and radical ideas were pushed to the fore by supporters of the new order. They were met with equally shrill rhetoric from opponents. That time has passed and some progress has been made. Unfortunately, the earlier time has left a residue of misunderstanding and bitterness that continues to plague progress on this issue. A new beginning based on positive attempts to understand the concerns and problems of each, whether or not they prove reconcilable, is needed.

Cooperation

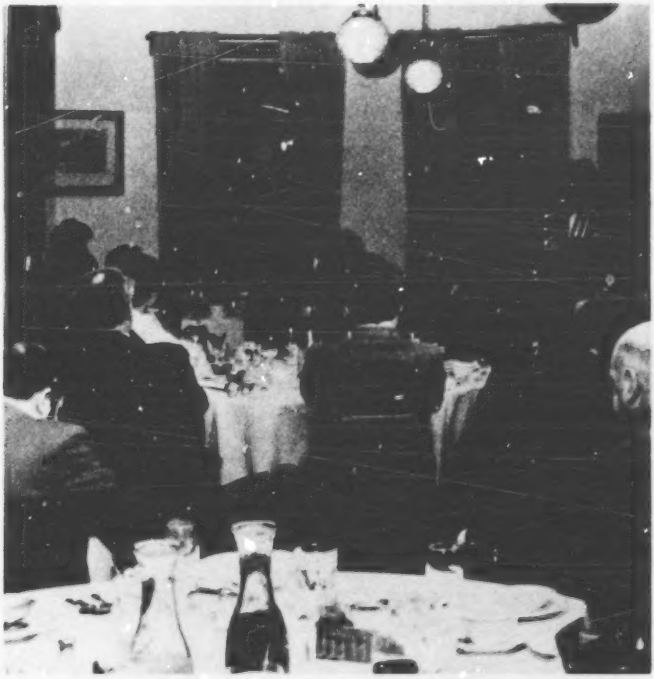
The Third World cannot change the information and communications systems by itself. This is true no matter how valid its criticisms of the present system and however worthy the desired changes. The South can muster the strong majority of votes in UNESCO and other international organizations where the one-nation, one-vote system prevails. However, resolutions of these bodies will not produce desired results without the cooperation of the private sector information and communications systems of the North and the support of its governments.

Cooperation is unlikely without agreement on the nature and the programs of the new information order, and such agreement is unlikely without compromise by both the North and the South. A compromise is unlikely until the level of misunderstanding is reduced and until both sides recognize that a better balance in the information and communication areas is in their common interests.

Conclusion

We have arranged this conference believing that the interests of both the North and the South would be beneficially served by improved information and communication programs and systems. The positions of the North and the South seem far apart. Yet, there is merit in certain positions of each side; justice and freedom are both essential. A proper balance between these two concepts calls for understanding, compro-

mise, and cooperation. I have every reason to believe that your combined knowledge and interest will produce recommendations helpful to resolving the differences now blocking progress in improving the world's systems concerning information and communications. I challenge you to enter our deliberation with open minds and objective reasoning.



Akashi

Bullen

Berlin

Mehan

Singh

Albornoz

Aggarwala

Soso

Evetts

Bailey

Jones

Sussman

tevenson

Powell

loreno-Salcedo

Power

Schlegel

R. H. Stanley

International Information Policy

Conceptual Conflict

Misunderstandings of the Past

Participants agreed that early on the stormy debate on information and communications questions created some misunderstandings. It was noted that while many of the early radical proposals had never received serious consideration, for example, the proposal to license journalists, they had created an atmosphere of suspicion and misunderstanding. The participants generally agreed that while there are still legitimate differences over information policy, the rhetoric of the past has cooled considerably and some progress has been made to establish understanding of each other's concerns.

Most participants agreed that the imbalance in the flow of information, the quality in reporting of the Third World, and technological needs of the developing countries continue to pose problems. (These matters will be discussed in more detail later in the report.) While most acknowledge the existence of serious problems, disagreement over the depth and importance of each particular issue remains. For the past decade, the Third World's answer to the imbalances has been the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO)—as yet an ill-defined term. Participants agreed that an attempt to precisely define NWICO would be a fruitless waste of time and effort. Indeed, attention was called to a publication which shows how the same words carry vastly different connotations in various parts of the world.

Freedom vs. Justice: The Issue of Government Control

The discussion of NWICO led to an extensive exchange of ideological views on this concept. Many important conceptual differences were observed. One group held that NWICO posed a threat to freedom of the press because even though many radical proposals concerning the "new order" had been eliminated, governments still expected to play a major role in implementing solutions to information and communication problems, thus enhancing opportunities to restrict a free press. Programs of international organizations are geared to serve national governments and respond to requests for aid from those governments. This situation, it was contended, could

lead not only to control of the media but also to media used to oppress and manipulate the citizenry. Lastly, the point was made that even if this more radical scenario of loss of freedom never transpired, the West should not support possibilities for governments to interrupt the flow of news—in short, the greater the opportunity the greater the likelihood of loss of press freedom.

Another group of conferees, while supporting press freedom, expressed a view that the West's fears were unfounded in some cases and overstated in others. They contended that it is unrealistic to think that information imbalances can be remedied without dealing with governments. In most poor countries, it was noted, the government is the only existing structure capable of using aid to establish the information and communication infrastructure and, therefore, is the only means to correct the existing injustice. Further, they charged, government ownership of media and freedom of the press are not antithetical concepts. The developed world has government-owned or supported media, for example, the BBC in the United Kingdom, PBS in the United States, and CBC in Canada, all of which operate freely. It follows that since most developing countries possess limited, if any, private sector communication capability, money must go to the government if the communication infrastructure is to be improved; this inevitability must be accepted. Thus, avoiding the dangers to press freedom is a separate issue from government control. They further contended that without this aid to governments it would not be possible for information to penetrate to people in the Third World who now receive little or no news. Lastly, it was noted that failure to rectify information imbalances would continue to inhibit economic development in the Third World. The lack of adequate information and the paucity of reporting by the developed world's press on the positive events in these countries makes implementation of economic and social development even more difficult.

Another participant said while he is not opposed to press freedom, that freedom must be balanced against the responsibility for truth and accuracy in reporting. Principles included in the UN Charter, such as national sovereignty and noninterference in the affairs of other states, should be respected by responsible journalists. The reference to press responsibility opened discussion on another area concerning government control.

Journalistic Conduct

Participants largely agreed on the need to set journalistic norms but disagreed on their nature and on who should establish these standards for conduct. It was noted that some Western journalistic organizations have had ethical codes for a long time although this certainly has not eliminated sensationalistic or "yellow" journalism. Despite these problems, most participants were strongly opposed to any government role in setting standards for journalistic behavior.

One participant noted that freedom in the hands of the powerful media can be oppressive and that the law can provide a liberating influence. Other professions such as doctors and lawyers established and now operate with freedom under strict ethical codes. Further, it was argued, the need for journalistic norms is urgent. Journalists should not wait to act, for in the absence of voluntary action governments may be forced to establish codes. Another participant reiterated the view that while journalists should be protected, citizens deserve protection from the press; freedom and responsibility must be combined.

Consensus

The discussion of these ideological issues led to one of the conference's most significant and noteworthy points of consensus: ideological questions are unresolvable and therefore international debate should move toward a discussion of positive, pragmatic steps to address the information imbalances. On these issues there is room for flexibility, compromise, agreement, and progress.

A second significant point of consensus was: NWICO is a dynamic process for change and not a scheme to impose an inflexible and unworkable structure on the world's information systems. This perception was very widely held with only one participant warning that the process could lead to an oppressive structure.

Pragmatic Efforts

Having acknowledged that there are deep ideological differences which divide experts on information questions, the participants showed considerable harmony on the need for practical programs to strengthen information and communication systems in the developing world. Recognizing that differences over the appropriateness and efficacy of specific

programs will always exist, participants overwhelmingly agreed that these differences are less important than the overriding need to improve world information systems. The group surveyed many of the programs in place, commented on the problems facing those programs, and offered ideas for new efforts. Much is already happening; however, measured against the need, the effort is small.

UNESCO Programs

UNESCO has concerned itself with information matters since its inception in 1946. In recent years, most of the debate about information systems has taken place in UNESCO, causing much attention to be focused on the agency. Nevertheless, it was noted that only 3 percent of UNESCO's budget (about $6 million annually) is spent on communications. One participant said that it was still too much, charging that many of UNESCO's studies, reports, and discussions have promoted ideas which threaten press freedom. He called UNESCO an "incubator of ideas" for such practices as licensing journalists and government-imposed codes of ethics. While he acknowledged that these have not been adopted by UNESCO, governments which seek to restrict press freedom employ these ideas learned at UNESCO within their own countries. Other participants, however, responded that UNESCO is *supposed* to be an incubator of ideas and that it cannot be condemned because some groups do not like certain ideas which are discussed in it. UNESCO's rejection of these ideas, it was noted, is the most important point to remember. Further, governments which really want to restrict press freedom can do so without any help from UNESCO.

Beyond studies and discussions producing controversial ideas, UNESCO has programs to train journalists and advise media institutions in the Third World. The agency's anti-illiteracy campaign and adult education efforts aimed at helping people better use and understand what they find in the media were specially cited as worthwhile efforts.

International Programme for the Development of Communications

While operated within UNESCO, the International Programme for the Development of Communications (IPDC), which is funded separately, was given special attention. IPDC was established by the UNESCO General Conference in 1978 to provide seed money for specific communications projects

aimed at rectifying the global information imbalance. To date, $4.9 million has been pledged to IPDC's Special Fund supplemented by in-kind assistance channeled through IPDC. However, as one participant noted, the amount of money is a drop in the bucket compared to the $60 million in requests.

The United States has contributed $1.4 million to IPDC but has put those funds in trust, effectively leaving itself the power to veto funding for a proposal it does not like. So far very little of the US money has actually been released. Additionally, some were concerned about the impact of the proposed US pullout from UNESCO on IPDC funding. However, a participant with knowledge of current US government thinking said the United States is still committed to supporting communication development and IPDC is likely to be factored into planning.*

Insufficient funding is not the only problem facing IPDC. Presently only governments can apply for funding; some would like nongovernmental bodies to be eligible for IPDC funds. The Intergovernmental Council—the body which approves IPDC projects—insists on geopolitical balance in the distribution of funds and that is worrisome to some people. UNESCO's management of the program was also questioned by a few who said not all proposals get adequate attention. Most alarming to the West is the IPDC practice to fund government-owned media projects almost exclusively; more attention to privately-owned media efforts should be encouraged.

The appropriateness of some of the approved projects was also discussed. Funding for national news agencies with avowed political agendas was decried by a participant who likewise criticized the funding of a national communication project which will give the government of Malaysia control over all information flowing in and out of the country. From the perspective of this participant, it gives the government an opportunity to censor the media by "pulling the plug." However, another participant noted that the government has been able to exercise this kind of control all along through its ability to pull the plug on the telecommunication lines which carry

*Though not directly germane to the conference topic, some discussion centered on the US withdrawal from UNESCO. It was strongly urged that the United States reverse its decision and try to make the changes it considers necessary from within the organization. A few, however, disassociated themselves from that view calling it inappropriate to criticize one country at this conference.

international news into and out of the country. Further, he argued, Malaysian government control of the flow and support for information systems will now make it possible for small newspapers in that country to subscribe to a news service (or parts of several news services) which they could not afford before, thus putting news into the hands of more people and creating, not suppressing, freedom.

In spite of the vexing problems facing IPDC, there was strong consensus that it will and should remain a centerpiece of pragmatic efforts by intergovernmental organizations to address communications problems.

UN Activities

The work of the main UN body to strengthen information capabilities is "modest in scope and budget." The Department of Public Information (UNDPI) engages in some journalist training through internships, cooperates with Third World news agencies, operates Information Centres to explain the work of the United Nations, and helps coordinate the work of other UN bodies concerned with information through the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC). The department also produces the *World Newspaper Supplement* for print media and *Agenda for a Small Planet* for electronic media—efforts to provide information on critical issues discussed at the United Nations. It was noted that developing countries have been asking for many more services, an indication, according to some, that they are hungry for additional sources of information.

UNDPI is currently under fire from some UN critics for being too one-sided in its presentations, but, it was noted, the department has to answer to the General Assembly which is anxious to have its positions on controversial issues well publicized. This leaves little time for UNDPI to do anything else. In addition, this forced advocacy role strains its credibility as a legitimate news source.

Other Public Sector Efforts

Less thoroughly discussed but much larger in terms of funding are United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and bilateral efforts aimed at building the communication infrastructure in developing countries. UNDP spends $20-25 million annually to support such projects. Some bilateral programs contribute tens of millions of dollars. While these numbers may sound impressive, much more is needed—both from the public and private sectors.

Private Sector Initiatives

Much of the attempt to address Third World communication deficiencies is occurring in private channels. Attention was called to *The List of Talliores* which is a compilation of more than 300 private media development projects in 60 countries available to developing world journalists. It was acknowledged that the list is not comprehensive. There was consensus that the private sector is well positioned to facilitate training of journalists, assist in technology transfer, and educate developed country editors about the need for more balanced coverage.

Training Journalists

Dozens of programs to help train Third World journalists already exist but more are needed, the group agreed. Several suggestions were offered:

1. US foundations should fund internship programs to bring Third World journalism students to the United States to gain practical experience. It was further suggested that these students should cover city halls in smaller US cities to help them gain a better understanding of the United States and to help US citizens learn more about them.
2. Mechanisms should be established to staff news agency bureaus in Third World countries with some journalism students to offer them firsthand experience.
3. In the Third World, editors should frequently meet to discuss important international issues to ensure better reporting.
4. Competent journalists from the North should be sent to Third World countries to observe the problems facing local journalists. Having learned the situation, they would be in a better situation to offer suggestions on how local journalists might cope with these indigenous problems.

Technology Transfer

Without equipment and materials, even the best trained Third World journalists cannot disseminate material to the public. Thus, appropriate technology for the Third World is badly needed. Some of the currently existing private efforts as well as public programs address this problem. Again, much more is required.

A plea was made for simple things. Developing countries often need such things as typewriters and instructional radio and television equipment. Availability of affordable paper and improved telecommunications are also vital. Attention

was drawn to a private effort in the United States to train more than 200 Third World students on hardware and software employed in telecommunications.

Educating Editors

Several participants familiar with the US news industry acknowledged that there is a lot of bad journalism practiced in the United States. Participants decried the paucity of Third World coverage in all but the largest US news outlets. It was agreed that the "gatekeepers" who edit smaller newspapers are often poorly educated on international relations and thus cannot well judge the importance of available news material. Further, it was asserted, they underestimate the demand for Third World news from their readers, a fact which has been supported by several studies. Some suggested that editors will become more attuned to Third World news only as people are generally better educated about the importance of international events. Some were optimistic that this is already happening.

Technology—Force for Change

An important phenomenon is the technological revolution—the development of new and often less costly communications systems. Direct Broadcast Satellite distribution will bring more information. The rapidly growing presence of video cassette recorders even in the Third World means information can be passed on without going through broadcast channels which could be controlled by governments. Computer data bases are proliferating and becoming more affordable. One participant brought relatively inexpensive equipment with him and demonstrated for the conference the availability in the United States of Third World news stories contained in a data base. Such equipment, which could be available worldwide, is quickly becoming more affordable. New technologies frequently bring with them new problems. However, there was consensus that technology holds the potential to knock down borders related to information and may ultimately render potential government control of information impossible.

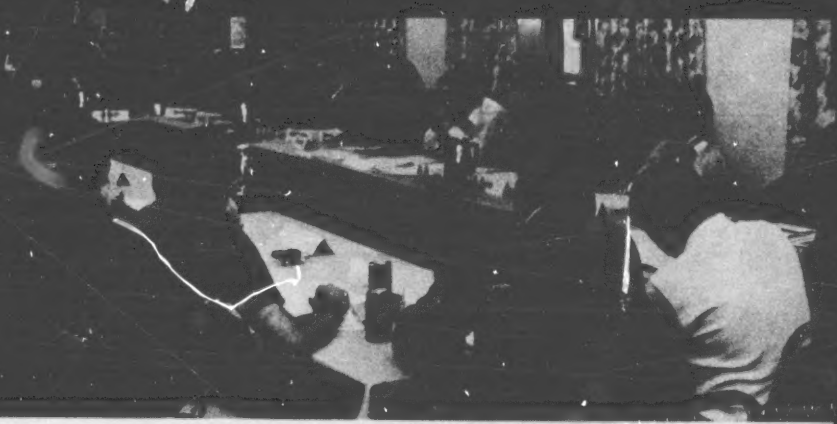
Recommendations

Numerous recommendations were put forward by individual participants. The following appeared to garner consensus:

1. In order to achieve progress in rectifying and addressing information and communication problems, discussion on

ideological issues must be set aside and attention should be focused on the more solvable practical issues. (Several participants offered lists of conceptual recommendations which they said should guide the implementation of communication programs, but they did not gain consensus.)

2. In future deliberations, NWICO should be viewed as a process not a structure. In fact, a few suggested that because earlier misunderstanding on this issue stemmed from the NWICO title, consideration might be given to changing the name.
3. Both the public and private sectors must work to improve Third World communications capabilities.
4. Developing countries should place a higher priority on using available aid to improve their information and communication capability.
5. Journalists and their organizations should make known their existing ethical norms and continue to work for accuracy and objectivity in reporting.
6. Efforts should be made in the North to educate the broadcast and press editors about the importance of activity in the developing world.
7. A number of technical recommendations should be adopted:
   a. Low cost communications instruments should be produced for wide distribution to developing countries.
   b. High priority should be given to development of low cost news print.
   c. Information on already existing training programs should be widely circulated.
   d. A global data bank which includes communications needs and resources should be created.
   e. The North should share telecommunications facilities with the South.
8. Governments should not neglect the multilateral avenues for communications aid since these often carry the fewest political strings.



Stanley Foundation Publications

Publications available free of charge include:

Dealing with International Crises: Lessons from Zimbabwe, Occasional Paper 34. Jeffrey Davidow. October 1983, 24 pp.

Rethinking US-Soviet Relations, World Economic Recovery and Growth, Preserving Peace: The UN Option, US Policy in Central America. Twenty-Fourth Strategy for Peace Conference Report. October 1983. 64 pp.

The United Nations: Peace and Security, June 1983 United Nations of the Next Decade Conference Report. 48 pp.

The United Nations: Conflict Management; Effective Administration, Fourteenth Conference on United Nations Procedures Report. May 1983, 40 pp.

Soviet Security in Flux, Occasional Paper 33. Nish Jamgotch, Jr. May 1983, 32 pp.

Global Citizenship, An Address by C. Maxwell Stanley, April 1983, 16 pp.

Myths and Realities: American Nuclear Strategy, Occasional Paper 32. Louis René Beres. December 1982, 28 pp.

US Policy and North-South Relations, US-China Relations in the 1980s, US Security and Arms Control in Europe, US-Soviet Strategic Nuclear Negotiations, Twenty-Third Strategy for Peace Conference Report. October 1982, 64 pp.

Maintaining Peace in Outer Space, June 1982 United Nations of the Next Decade Conference Report. 48 pp.

Resource Optimization and World Peace, Occasional Paper 30. Arthur H. Purcell. March 1982, 24 pp.

Radiological Weapons Control: A Soviet and US Perspective, Occasional Paper 29. Victor L. Issraelyan and Charles C. Flowerree. February 1982, 32 pp.

A New International Diplomatic Order, Occasional Paper 24. Tom Boudreau. December 1980, 24 pp.

Also available:

Managing Global Problems. C. Maxwell Stanley. 1979, 286 pp. Management concepts applied to major global problems. Hardcover $12.50, softcover $7.95, postpaid from the Foundation. Now at special rates of $7.50 and $5.50.

The Stanley Foundation
420 East Third Street
Muscatine, Iowa 52761
Telephone 319-264-1500

Stanley Foundation Activities

The Stanley Foundation encourages study, research, and discussion of international issues contributing to a secure peace with freedom and justice. Programming reflects founder and President C. M. Stanley's long-time concern for global security. Stanley Foundation activities include:

Conferences for diplomats, scholars, business leaders, and public officials from every continent are conducted by the Foundation each year. Following most, a comprehensive summary report is printed and widely distributed free of charge to policy makers and interested individuals. Conference participation is by invitation only.

Educational Seminars for US congressional staff members are convened annually at the United Nations and in the Washington, DC, area. The sessions focus on issues important to the United Nations and the United States.

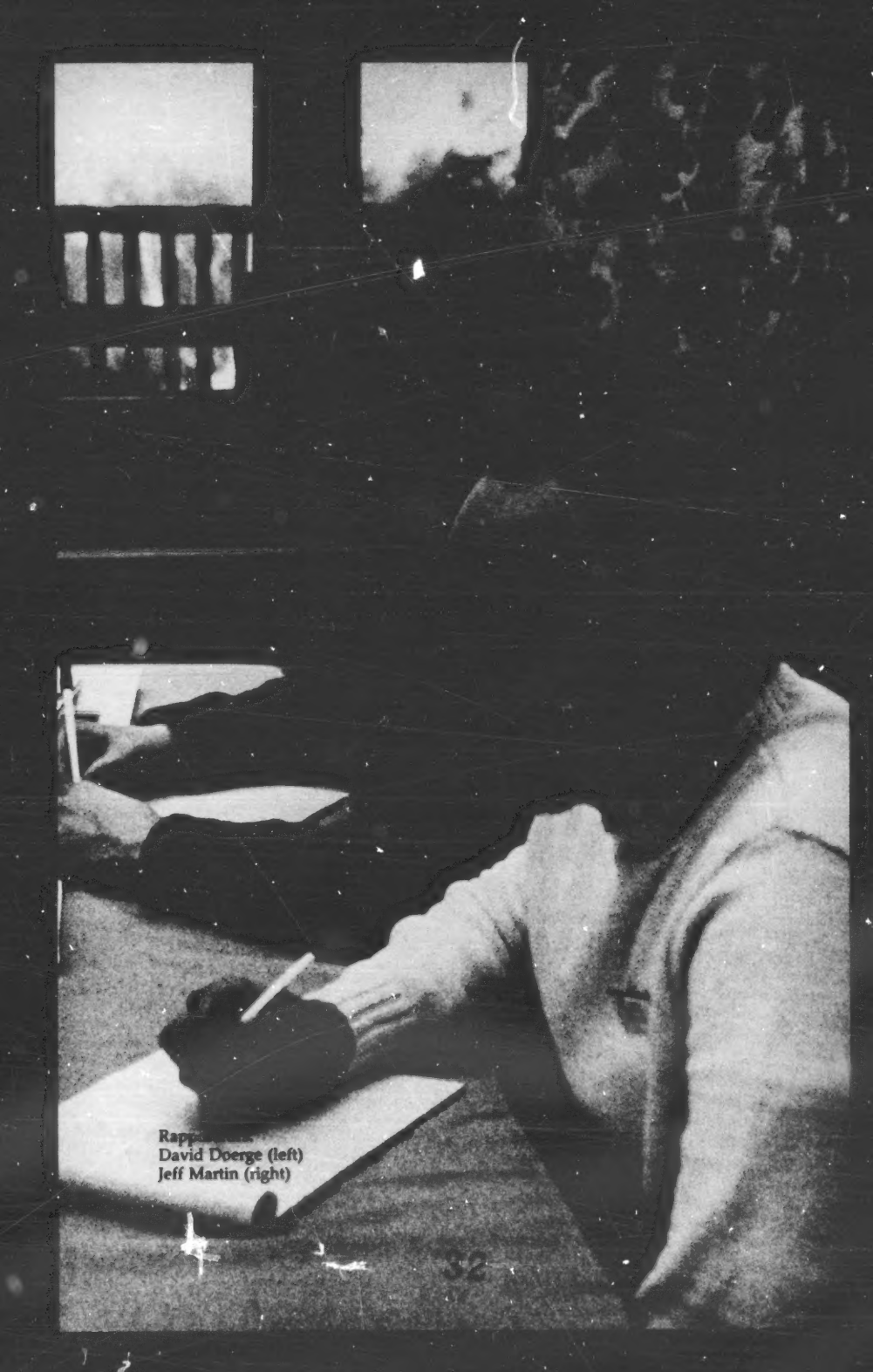
Occasional Papers, original essays on international issues, are published periodically and distributed free nationally and internationally. Papers present practical initiatives, options, or strategies for US foreign policy or international organizations. Manuscript submissions are welcome.

World Press Review, a monthly magazine based in New York City, features excerpts from the press outside the United States and interviews with prominent international specialists on a wide range of issues.

Common Ground, a radio series on world affairs, is aired weekly nationwide. Programs feature US and foreign experts discussing political, economic, military, or social aspects of international and US foreign policy issues. Cassette recordings are available for purchase.

The Outreach Program supports midwestern groups that seek information on international issues. Planning assistance, educational materials, and speaker support are available to churches, professional and service groups, and other nonprofit organizations. Outreach projects aim to stimulate international awareness and encourage participants to join with others in pursuing peace and shaping public policy.

The Stanley Foundation, a private operating foundation, does not provide grants. A free brochure is available.



Rapp[illegible]
David Doerge (left)
Jeff Martin (right)